

Executive Branch

At a Glance

Time: 45 m	Grade Level: 2–9
Description: This lesson plan explores the roles of each executive officer in the state of Georgia: the governor, secretary of state, and lieutenant governor. Students will learn what role each officer plays, and what is required of each candidate for office.	
Standards: SS2CG2; SS3CG1; SS4CG3; SS8CG1, SS8CG3; SSCG4.	
Objectives: Participants will learn the three main officers of the executive branch: governor, lieutenant governor, and secretary of state. Participants will learn the roles of the executive branch. Participants will learn the responsibilities of each executive officer.	
Supplies: Paper and/or slideshow	
Bibliography: <i>Constitution of Georgia</i> , 2013. https://sos.ga.gov/admin/files/Constitution_2013_Final_Printed.pdf .	
Essential Questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What does the executive branch do?2. Why is power divided between three executive officers?3. Why is power divided between three governmental branches?	

Sample Script

Today we will be learning about the executive branch of our state government. We will review the responsibilities and requirements of office.

Intro discussion:

What do you think the executive branch does?

Executes laws.

Catches criminals.

Stops crime.

Provides licenses for businesses.

Provides licenses for professionals.

Approves legislation already passed by the legislature.

Runs elections.

Connects constituents with services.

Can you think of anyone you or your family interact with that are part of the executive branch of government?

Public school teachers/staff/faculty.

Who are the three main people in charge of the executive branch in the state of Georgia?

Governor.

Lieutenant governor.

Secretary of state.

Next, we will go a little more in depth on how these offices of the executive branch work.

Option: Watch video or give lecture.

Let's review the requirements each candidate must meet before running for office.

Does anyone know how old must you be to run for governor?

You must be at least thirty years old to run for governor of Georgia.

Does anyone know where must you live to be governor of Georgia?

You must be a Georgia resident for at least six years.

Can a non-citizen become governor of Georgia if they meet the other two requirements?

No, you must be a U.S. citizen for at least fifteen years.

How do the requirements for lieutenant governor differ from the requirements for governor?

They are not different! Both candidates must be thirty years old, have lived in Georgia for six years, and have been a U.S. citizen for fifteen years.

How do the requirements for secretary of state differ from the requirements for governor?

They must have been a U.S. citizen for ten years.

They must have been a Georgia resident for four years.

They must be at least twenty-five years old.

Activity 1: Constitutional Rewrite

You may break students into groups for this activity

The constitution sets the rules for who gets to run for office. Today, you will choose one requirement for any of the three offices we have discussed to change. You must be prepared to explain the reason you want to change that specific requirement.

Example:

We think that the secretary of state's office should be open to anyone eighteen years and older. This is because the United States allows all citizens 18 years and older to serve in the military and to vote. This significant portion of the population (between ages eighteen and twenty-five) are underrepresented in state government.

Now we'll review each office's responsibilities. It is important to keep in mind that these responsibilities can change. The state constitution has been rewritten 10 times!

Governor:

- 1. Commander in chief of the state's military forces (Georgia National Guard).*
- 2. Fills vacancies in the state House and Senate, U.S. Senate, and the Georgia Supreme Court.*
- 3. Drafts and transmits the annual budget message.*
- 4. Delivers the state of the state address to the General Assembly.*
- 5. Calls the General Assembly into special session.*
- 6. Reviews reports from constitutional officers, state agencies, and government employees.*
- 7. Reviews, signs, and vetoes legislation before it becomes a law.*
- 8. Make records like maps, surveys, grants, rules, and regulations accessible to the public. (This used to be the responsibility of the Secretary of State).*

9. Appoints members to certain state boards

Lieutenant Governor:

- 1. Serves as president and presiding officer of the state Senate.*
- 2. Casts tie-breaking vote in the state Senate.*
- 3. Sits on executive branch boards.*
- 4. "Shall have such executive duties as prescribed by the governor and as may be prescribed by law not inconsistent with the powers of the governor or other provisions of this constitution.*

Secretary of State

- 1. Oversees elections in Georgia.*
- 2. Maintains state symbols (flag, seal, etc.)*
- 3. Supports boards that oversee and regulate sixty trades and professions.*
- 4. Grants licenses to veterinarians, barbers, plumbers, and many more professions.*
- 5. Keeps track of trades and service marks.*

Activity 2: Constituent Services (see worksheet)

Now that we know each office's role, we are going to try and match requests to the correct executive officer. Remember, just because it goes to a specific office does not mean the executive officer themselves will handle the request! It will most likely go to a specific staff member on their team.

“I need to find out where my closest polling station is for the upcoming election.”

Secretary of state's office

“I would like to comment on bill A-1053 in the Senate.”

Lieutenant governor

“I want to make sure that educators get a larger portion of the state's budget next year.”

Governor

“I am opening a new business! How do I get a business license?”

Secretary of state

“I am trying to get records from the Georgia Archives, can you tell me where it is?”

Governor

Take Home Activities *See worksheets*

Campaign for office

Choose an office and launch a campaign for that office. Think about your slogan. How would you handle your office's responsibilities? What is one change you would make to the way things work? This change needs to be within the scope of your office's current responsibilities (the governor cannot change the rules for how the Senate operates, and the lieutenant governor cannot change elections procedures).

Constitutional Amendment

Think of one to three changes to make to the responsibilities of governor, lieutenant governor, and secretary of state. Explain why you want to make these changes.